Date: June 2011

Public Information Office: +93 (0)70-234-236 x4015

E-mail: kabulusaidinformation@usaid.gov

http://afghanistan.usaid.gov

FACT SHEET

Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development (ASMED)

OVERVIEW

The Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development (ASMED) project encourages the establishment and growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that are a major driver of Afghanistan's economic development. Through support for investment, technology transfer, and a wide range of business development services, ASMED seeks to improve private-sector productivity by expanding the number of flourishing SMEs and increasing employment opportunities in Afghanistan. In its final year of implementation, ASMED will concentrate on projects within 25 key districts to create professional and commercial opportunities and linkages among enterprises in these districts and between the districts and regional and national markets.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Provide grants, training, and technical assistance to improve product value chains in key sectors such as agribusiness, carpets, marble, gemstones, and business services
- Build the capacity of business service providers to provide valuable business development services to a wide range of SMEs
- Facilitate internal and external market linkages for Afghan SMEs and products by providing training, market research, and assistance for participating in domestic and international trade fairs
- Facilitate public-private partnerships and grants to businesses and business associations

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided 480 business skills training sessions throughout the country
- Created approximately 95,700 full-time equivalent jobs since late 2006
- Supported more than 10,000 Afghan businesses and facilitated access to bank loans and equity for 142 of those companies
- Established more than 131 (including 32 women-run) business associations and supported more than 260 associations with grants for equipment, capacity building, and improving member services
- Launched 52 global development alliances, leveraging more than \$103 million (\$88 million from private partners; \$15 million from USAID) in insurance, apparel, natural resource extraction, information technology, media, and food processing
- Provided 244 grants totaling \$8 million for market development, value chain improvement, association capacity building, capacity development, and economic development.
- Established an internship program benefitting 2,226 university students (22 percent women);
 approximately 75 percent of the graduated interns have received full-time employment offers from their host companies
- Offered 521 (171 women) professional mentorship opportunities linking young entrepreneurs with business executives
- Conducted or sponsored 23 market assessments and widely disseminated results to share information about business development and investment opportunities
- Facilitated the sale of more than \$49 million of Afghan SME products at national and international trade shows